

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants would like to thank Examiner Zacharia for the helpful and courteous discussion he had with Applicants' U.S. representative on February 8, 2006. At that time, Applicants' U.S. representative proposed amendments and presented arguments to overcome the rejections. The following expands upon the discussion.

The rejection of Claims 1, 4-7, 10, 12, 17 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Nishio (U.S. 2004/0213969) is respectfully traversed.

Nishio describes a releasing laminated film which contains at least one fluororesin film laminated on a supporting film. Nishio does not teach or suggest a copolymer of tetrafluoroethylene, ethylene and a fluorinated vinyl monomer which is not tetrafluoroethylene as claimed for the claimed carrier film. Therefore, the claimed carrier film would not have been anticipated or obvious over Nishio, and accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Nishio.

The rejection of Claims 2, 3, 8, 9, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combination of Nishio and Ukihashi (U.S. Patent 4,123,602) is respectfully traversed.

Ukihashi describes terpolymers of tetrafluoroethylene, ethylene and perfluoroalkyl vinyl monomer. As noted above, Nishio describes a laminated film. However, Ukihashi and Nishio do not teach or suggest a laminated carrier film where the haze of the laminated film is at most 5% as claimed for the claimed carrier film.

The Examiner notes that Nishio is silent with regard to film haze (page 3 of the Office Action) but concludes that Nishio inherently has the claimed haze properties. In addition, the Examiner suggests that film haze is necessarily related to film smoothness and it would be obvious to maximize smoothness and thus film haze.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's conclusions. For example, applicants note that the examples provided in the specification demonstrate that the film described in Nishio does not necessarily have the claimed haze properties and that film smoothness is not necessarily related to film haze.

Applicants direct the Examiner to Table 1 on page 11 of the specification. The compositions and properties of two carrier films are presented in Table 1. Ex. 1 and Comp. Ex. 1 were prepared in the same manner (page 10, lines 21-26) and only differ in the ratio of the monomer components. Ex. 1 has a fluorinated vinyl monomer (PFBE) content of 3.0% which is within the claimed range and Comp. Ex. 1 has a PFBE content of 1.3% which is outside the claimed range. Ex. 1 has a haze value of 3.1% which is within the claimed range and Comp. Ex. 1 has a haze value of 5.7% which is outside the claimed range.

The results listed in Table 1 demonstrate that film composition (e.g. a fluorinated vinyl monomer component) can affect the haze value of a film and that the film described in Nishio does not necessarily have the claimed haze limitations. The results also show that film composition and not film smoothness can affect film haze since the two films are the same except for composition.

Overall, the results show that a film produced by the combination of Nishio and Ukihashi would not necessarily have the claimed haze limitations of the claimed carrier film. Accordingly, the combination of Nishio and Ukihashi does not teach or suggest the claimed carrier film; and therefore, the claimed carrier film would not have been obvious over the combination of the two cited references. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combination of Nishio and Ukihashi.

Finally, Applicants respectfully request that dependent Claims 13-16 be rejoined if Claim 1 is found to be allowable (M.P.E.P. § 821.04).

In light of the remarks contained herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

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